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SECRETARY-GENERAL REITERATES INTENTION TO ASSIST IN SOLUTION TO EAST TIMOR QUESTION AND TO MONITOR HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION THERE

The following is the text of a statement issued today by the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy on East Timor, S. Amos Wako:

The Secretary-General held meetings in New York tday with the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Portugal -- as had been agreed at the last round of talks held on 21 April in Rome -- in the context of the ongoing efforts, under his auspices, to seek a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement to the question of East Timor. The Secretary-General met separately with each of the two Foreign Ministers and, subsequently, chaired a joint meeting.

As they had agreed in Rome, the Ministers considered possible confidence-building measures as a means of fostering an atmosphere propitious to addressing the substance of the question and reiterated their respective positions of principle. In this connection, the Secretary-General wishes to record the following points which emerged during their meeting:

-- The Ministers concurred on the importance of the promotion of respect for human rights, in all their indivisible aspects (civil, political, economic, social and cultural), and fundamental freedoms in East Timor;

-- They also concurred on the need to create a favourable and non-confrontational atmosphere in order to allow effective progress towards a comprehensive settlement of the question;

-- Both Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the consensus statement of the Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of 4 March 1992, and the need for further facilitating access to East Timor inter alia by the United Nations and humanitarian and human rights organizations. In this context, they noted with appreciation the second visit to East Timor in April by the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General;

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-- The Secretary-General reiterated his intention to continue to follow closely the human rights situation in East Timor in the spirit of the aforementioned consensus statement;

-- Both Ministers noted the Secretary-General's intention to carry out contacts, as he deems useful, in his efforts to assist in the solution of the question;

-- Both Ministers agreed to continue to promote a balanced exchange of visits by journalists and personalities from their respective countries; and

-- The Ministers identified a series of issues for discussion at the next round of talks.

Following today's discussions the parties agreed to continue their efforts, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, to find a solution to the question of East Timor. A further meeting between the two Foreign Ministers and the Secretary-General will be held in Geneva on 6 May 1994. Prior to that meeting, talks will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York between the representatives of the two Governments.

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